



## Q1 2026: Did you know? The Ripple Effect of AI on the Language Industry



### What Every Company with Translation Needs Must Know Now

As companies shift their translation work to AI platforms, a ripple effect is hitting professional translators. Many translators invest heavily in technology, training, and a lifetime of building up experience in their chosen field (*Merchant, 2025*). The move to AI is greatly reducing the amount of purely human translation work and is forcing translators to either review AI output at a fraction of the rates they would charge for doing the work from scratch or get out of the translation business altogether. Language Service Companies are also feeling the impact, with many seeing a reduction in the number and size of projects. If AI datasets become corrupted by errors, bias, or hallucinations, will qualified professionals still be available when you need them?

### A Shrinking Slice of a Critical Pie

Some translation work is deemed critical enough that it cannot be trusted to AI, even with human review. That smaller slice of the translation pie is not enough to sustain all the translators in each language and subject domain. When you combine these downward pressures on workload and prices with global population decline (*On The Market Podcast, 2026*), we will see a time when finding those specific skills and languages may no longer be possible.

The problem is concentrated in the countries where translation demand is highest. France, Italy, Germany, Spain, China, Korea, and Russia all face the lowest birth rates, while the nations with the highest birth rates generate little translation volume because they are relatively lower-income economies. The supply and demand gap is structural, not cyclical. Even niche languages like Greenlandic face acute shortages of technically trained translators, particularly those with backgrounds in chemistry or toxicology, and AI handles these languages poorly due to a scarcity of available training material.

### The Cost of Delay

If you are a company with a substantial volume of translation work that requires professional human translators, you will want to get as much done as possible and not delay projects assuming the same resources will be available next year. They may not be, and the cost to compete for the few specialists who remain could reach two to three times what you would pay today.

Should your AI experience not live up to the hype, or you find yourself spending more time fixing errors than being productive, it may be time to reconsider human translators. This is especially true if you are concerned that errors may be going undetected in pharmaceutical submissions, product safety sheets, or compliance filings, where the legal, regulatory, and reputational consequences can be severe.

### About GLTaC

GLTaC has specialized in technical and regulatory translation for 30 years. We maintain deep relationships with vetted subject-matter experts across critical language pairs; relationships built over decades that cannot be replicated on demand. When precision matters and the stakes are high, GLTaC is the partner you can rely on. Contact GLTaC to discuss your translation needs before the resources you require are no longer available.

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### References:

Merchant, B. (2025, August 21). AI killed my job: Translators. Blood in the Machine.

<https://www.bloodinthemachine.com/p/ai-killed-my-job-translators>

On The Market Podcast. (2026). You have until 2031: What happens when population goes negative? [Video]. YouTube.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YFHdV7waWbc>